



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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04/19/2012 Minutes

V2020 FISCAL RESOURCES TASK GROUP Meeting Minutes 4/19/12

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ATTENDEES: Heather Remoff, Joel Rothstein, Michael Stern, Pete Howard (Secretary),

INTRODUCTIONS:~ Pete acted as Chair. We welcomed Mike.~ Pete described Vision 2020 and some of the projects that the FRTG has carried out.

MY TAX DOLLARS: Gordon to report in May

PROPERTY TAX POLICY: Heather reviewed her 5 part series of articles for the Advocate, "Ideas For Growth In Arlington" (Ref 1). Mike followed her discussion closely. He would like to find out more about the assessing process. He would like to attend Board meetings. Pete noted that neither candidate for the Board of Assessors seemed to understand the question asked at Candidates Night: "Is land under assessed in Arlington and if so, what affect would it have on redevelopment?" In ensuing discussion, the pros & cons of split rate assessing were covered in some detail. Heather suggested we invite Rep Sean Garbally to a future meeting to discuss these issues. The group encouraged Heather to submit her articles to the Advocate.

ECONOMIC NEW GROWTH METRIC: Gordon has suggested that recent redevelopment in N Cambridge on Mass Ave might provide a way to estimate how much new growth revenue a similar redevelopment in Arlington might net the Town. He will report on this in May.

WATER & SEWER BILLING: Joel said that Scott has made progress on a presentation intended for the BoS. Hopefully Scott will be able to present it at the May meeting. Pete discussed the 2nd water meter warrant article & the FinCom's opposition based on the associated disincentive to conserve water. Joel expressed concern with the cost of more frequent billing and that if this cost were offset by outsourced billing, such billing not be done off shore.

FINANCIAL OFFICE CONSOLIDATION: This is a subject of Warrant Articles 32 & 33. Pete summarized the DOR report (Ref 2) which recommends consolidation of Assessors, Treasurer, & Comptroller under the Manager as a first step. Consolidation with the schools would come later. He also reviewed the Manager's plan to study with the stakeholders and report at the 2013 Town Meeting. He also discussed the Treasurer's response (Ref 3). A general discussion followed of the effectiveness of financial checks and balances in local elections.

MASTER PLAN: Pete provided copies of a recent memo from the Director of Planning & Community Development which summarizes recent efforts by her office.

NEW BUSINESS

Solar-voltaic power generation Scott

Wind power generation: David

Unpaid kindergarten assessment: David

NEXT MEETINGS .. 3rd Thursdays of the month Town Hall Annex

Ref 1 Ideas for Growth in Arlington

Ref 2 Town Manager's Financial Consolidation Plan & DOR Report

Ref 3 Town Treasurer Memos on Financial Consolidation